

Research and Innovation Overview 2024

Department of Ancient Classics

The Department of Ancient Classics at Maynooth University continues to uphold its strong tradition of scholarly excellence, with notable transitions in 2022-23, including new staff appointments and a robust schedule of academic events. The department fosters a dynamic research environment, engaging both staff and students in the exploration of classical antiquity, from Ancient Greece and Rome to the broader ancient Mediterranean world.

Head of Department: Dr Eoghan Moloney



Research Themes and Focus Areas

The department's research spans a wide range of topics in Ancient Classics, with a focus on:

- **Greek and Roman Philosophy:** Dr William Desmond is a leading researcher in ancient philosophy, and its modern reception, with a number of recent publications on Plato and the Cynic school.
- **Classical Reception:** The department explores how classical texts have been received and interpreted in later periods, particularly in modern literature and philosophy.
- **Cultural and Social History:** Faculty members engage in research that delves into the cultural and social dynamics of ancient societies, including the study of women in antiquity and the role of performance in Roman culture.



Significant Research Outputs

In 2022-2023, the department produced several notable publications that contribute to the field of Ancient Classics:

Publications

- Dr William Desmond published an introduction to the classical world, *Ancient Greece in 30 Hours* (Amazon, 2024) and a piece called *Musonius Rufus, Discourse 20* in *Brill's Companion to Musonius Rufus* (Leiden, 2022), for the collection 'Herodotus, Hegel, and Knowledge' in *Intellectual History Review*.
- Professor J.H.D. Scourfield contributed the article 'The Carpet Fits': Coincidence and Fate in Howards End' in *Cambridge Quarterly*, reflecting his work on classical reception in modern literature.

Research Events

- The department hosted a Classics Seminar series featuring invited speakers from across Ireland and the UK, covering topics such as ancient philosophy, literature, and the reception of classical texts.
- A colloquium on Euripides' *Bacchae* was held in collaboration with the Arts and Humanities Institute, featuring contributions from members of the department and scholars at Oxford University and Aarhus University.



Collaborations and Partnerships

The department maintains strong ties with both national and international academic communities. Key collaborations include:

- **Classical Association of Ireland:** The department hosted the annual **Summer School** of the Classical Association of Ireland, an event that brought together academics and non-academics from across Ireland and beyond for a series of lectures and activities.
- **Modes of Classical Reception:** In September, the department hosted a two-day conference on the *Reception of Classical Texts in the 19th and 20th Centuries*, in honour of Professor David Scourfield's retirement. This event featured contributions from international scholars.



Research Impact and Societal Contributions

The Department of Ancient Classics is committed to advancing the study of classical antiquity while also engaging with modern scholarship. The department's work on the reception of classical texts, especially in literature and philosophy, contributes to a deeper understanding of the ongoing influence of the classical world on modern thought.



Future Directions

The department will continue to expand its research in classical literature and ancient philosophy, with upcoming projects aimed at exploring the intersections between ancient and modern traditions. Additionally, colleagues plan future collaborations with international scholars for new projects on the Environmental Humanities, looking at (i) ecocritical approaches to ancient literature and (ii) responses to disaster and disruption in antiquity.

The Department of Ancient Classics at Maynooth University is dedicated to producing high-quality research that enriches both the academic community and broader public understanding of the ancient world. Through its publications, conferences, and collaborations, the department remains at the forefront of classical scholarship.